
W^{the}onderworker

Saint George Orthodox Church

Fourth Quarter, 2012

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

In this issue of *The Wonderworker* you will find news about some very important events occurring in the next two months. First, there is news of several special services including **Thanksgiving Eve, Christmas Eve and Day** and **New Year's Eve**. Then there is the announcement of the dance on November 30th celebrating the **Hundredth Anniversary of Albanian Independence**. Also, there are notices about **Bible Study, Tuesday Luncheons** and our **Spiritual Book Club**. Finally, there is information about the visit to our parish of a sister from **Saint Elisabeth Convent** in Minsk, Belarus. Please take note of these and plan to attend. Also, don't forget to subscribe to our annual **Community Christmas Card**. The subscription form is on page 2.

Here I would like to let you know about an important happening in the Orthodox Church in America in which I was honored to participate — the election of our new Primate, **Metropolitan Tikhon**.

On November 13, 2012, at the special *17th All-American Council* of the Orthodox Church in America, held in Holy Trinity Church, Parma, Ohio, almost 700 people, clergy and laypeople, gathered for the sole purpose of electing a successor to Metropolitan Jonah, who resigned in July of this year.

Following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy by all of the Bishops of the Church, the Council convened for the election. There were two ballots taken. On the first, no one received the required two-thirds majority needed for election. On the second ballot, Archbishop Tikhon of Philadelphia received 317 votes and Bishop Michael of New York received 355. These two names were submitted to the Holy Synod of Bishops, who then elected Archbishop Tikhon as the new **Archbishop of Washington, D.C., Metropolitan of All America and Canada**.

Born in Boston, Mass, in 1966, His Beatitude converted to the Orthodox Faith in 1989 and entered Saint Tikhon's Seminary later that same year. He joined the monastic brotherhood the next year and received his Master of Divinity degree in 1993. After graduation, he taught Old Testament at the Seminary. He was ordained to the Holy Priesthood in 1995 and consecrated a Bishop in 2004. In May of this year, he was elevated to the rank of Archbishop.

Metropolitan Tikhon was immediately vested with the symbols of his office. He will be officially enthroned as Metropolitan in Saint Nicholas Cathedral, Washington, D.C., at a later date.

May God bless the ministry of our new Primate, and give him the wisdom and strength to guide us for many years to come!

Fr. Dennis



Newly-elected
Metropolitan Tikhon

Upcoming services

In the coming weeks, there are a few special Church services — some new, some familiar — that will be celebrated at Saint George Church.

First of all, on Wednesday, November 21st, the Feast of the **Entrance of the Virgin Mary into the Temple** and the eve of **Thanksgiving Day**, the Divine Liturgy for the Feast will be celebrated at 9:30 a.m. That evening, a special **Service of Thanksgiving** will be celebrated at 7:00 p.m. This will give us the opportunity to begin our family Thanksgiving observances by formally giving thanks to God in Church.

Next, on Thursday, December 6th, **Saint Nicholas Day**, the Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at 9:30 a.m. in remembrance of this very important Saint.

Then, on Monday, December 24th, Christmas Eve, our traditional **Matins and Carol Sing** will begin at 5:00 p.m. The next day, December 25th,

the Feast of the **Nativity of our Lord**, the Divine Liturgy will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Finally, on December 31st, New Year's Eve, the **Vespertal Divine Liturgy** for the feasts of Saint Basil the Great, the Circumcision of our Lord and the New Year, will be celebrated at 5:00 p.m., followed by New Year's fellowship in the Church Hall.

Please take note of these services and plan to attend and participate.



Saint George Orthodox Church

5490 Main Street
Trumbull, Connecticut 06611

Annual Community Christmas Card

We are now gathering names and donations for our Annual Community Christmas Card.

Please fill out this form and give it, along with your donation, to Mary Nikola.

You can also mail it to the Church at the address above.

All listings must be received by December 9, 2012.

Please make sure that your name appears (single line only) as you would like it to read on the card.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Donation: _____

Special visitor to Saint George Church

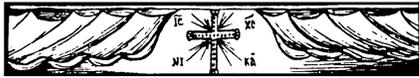
On Wednesday, December 19, 2012, a nun from the Convent of Saint Elisabeth the New Martyr in Minsk, Belarus, will visit our parish and tell us about the work they do.

The Convent was established in 1996 and operates a number of workshops that employ underprivileged people as well as clinics that serve the mentally ill former alcoholics and addicts.

Their workshops produce many religious articles, some of which will be available for purchase that evening.

We will begin at 6:30 p.m. in Church with the Akathist Hymn, *Glory to God for all things*. Then, at 7:00 p.m., the presentation will be held in the Church Hall.

Please join us for a look at what Orthodox Christians around the world are doing for those in need.



Tuesday luncheon to be offered

On Tuesday, November 27th, a special luncheon will be offered in the Church Hall beginning at 12:00 noon.

Anyone who is available at that time of day is invited to attend and bring a friend. This might include senior citizens, retirees, night-shift workers, un- or under-employed people, housewives or househusbands, students....

Please let Laura Chadwick or Father Dennis know if you will be coming.

Come and enjoy an afternoon of good food, good conversation and great fellowship. And bring a friend!

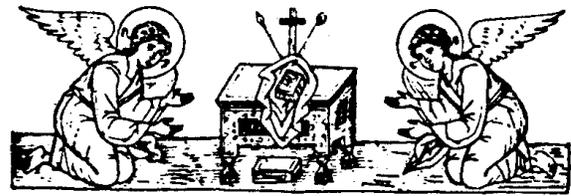
One Hundredth Anniversary of Albanian Independence

On Friday, November 30th, there will be a dance in the Church Hall celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of the raising of the Albanian over Vlora in 1912.

The dance will begin at 7:00 p.m. and is "BYOBNF" (bring your own bottle and food).

Contact **Nardi Tollkuçi** or **Liliana Kërma** for details and ticket information.

Everyone is welcome to come and celebrate this significant milestone in Albanian history.



Spiritual Book Club to begin

On Tuesday, November 27th, the **Spiritual Book Club**, a part of our Natural Church Development program, will hold its first session at the home of Laura Coughlin, starting at 7:00 p.m.

The group will begin reading *Bread & Water, Wine & Oil* by Archimandrite Meletios (Webber). This book offers readers an excellent introduction to Orthodox Christian spirituality. Copies of the book will be available at the meeting.

Laura Coughlin and Karen Masek are coordinating the **Book Club** and ask that anyone who plans to attend let them know so that they know how many to prepare for.

Everyone is invited, and friends are most welcome.

Christ

Christian spirituality is centered in Christ. Jesus Christ is the divine Son of God who was born as a man of the Virgin Mary in order to give man eternal life in communion with God His Father.

In Jesus Christ "the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily." (*Colossians 2:9*) In Him is the "fullness" of "grace and truth" (*John 1:16-17*) and "all the fullness of God." (*Colossians 1:19*) When one sees and knows Jesus, one sees and knows God the Father. (*John 8:19, 14:7-9*) When one is in communion with Jesus, one is in abiding union with God. (*Cf. John 17, Ephesians 2, Romans 8, I John 1*)

The goal of human life is to be continually "in Christ." When one is "in Christ," according to St. John, one does God's will and cannot sin.

You know that He (*Jesus*) appeared to take away sins, and in Him there is no sin. No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has either seen Him or knows Him... he who does right in righteous, as He is righteous.... No one born of God commits sin; for God's nature abides in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God. By this it may be seen who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil; whoever does not do right is not of God, nor he who does not love his brother. (*I John 3:4-10*)

Jesus Christ is "the Way, the Truth and the Life." (*John 14:6*) He speaks the words of God. He does the work of God. The person who obeys Christ and follows His way and does what He does, loves God and accomplishes His will. To do this is the essence of spiritual life. Jesus has come that we may be like Him and do

in our own lives, by His grace, what He Himself has done.

Truly, truly I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father. (*John 14:12*)



Krishti

Spiritualiteti i krishterë është përqendruar në Krishtin. Jisu Krishti është Biri hyjnor i Perëndisë, i Cili u lind si njeri nga Virgjëresha Mari për t'i dhënë njeriut jetën e përjetshme në kungim me Perëndinë Atin e Tij.

Në Jisu Krishtin “tërë plotësia e hyjnisë banoi trupërisht” (*Kolosianët 2:9*). Në Atë është “plotësia” e “hirit dhe e së vërtetës” (*Joani 1:16-17*) dhe “tërë plotësia e Perëndisë” (*Kolosianët 1:19*). Kur dikush sheh dhe njih Jisuin, ai sheh dhe njih Perëndinë Atë. (*Joani 8:19, 14:7-9*) Kur dikush është në kungim me Jisuin, ai është në bashkim të qëndrueshëm me Perëndinë (*Kr. Joani 17, Efesianët 2, Romanët 8, 1 Joani 1*). Qëllimi i jetës njerëzore është që të jesh vazhdimisht “në Krishtin”. Kur dikush është “në Krishtin”, sipas Shën Joanit, ai bën vullnetin e Perëndisë dhe nuk mëkaton.

Dhe ju e dini se Ai (Jisui) u shfaq për të hequr mëkatet tona; dhe në të nuk ka mëkat. Kush qëndron në të nuk mëkaton; kush mëkaton nuk e ka parë dhe as nuk e ka njohur.... ai që zbaton drejtësinë është i drejtë, ashtu sikur është i drejtë Ai.... Kush lindi nga Perëndia nuk kryen mëkat, sepse fara e Perëndisë qëndron në të dhe nuk mund të mëkatojë, sepse lindi nga Perëndia. Prej kësaj njihen bijtë e Perëndisë dhe bijtë e djallit; kushdo që nuk praktikon drejtësinë nuk është nga Perëndia, dhe i tillë nuk është as ai që nuk do vëllanë e vet (*1 Joani 3:4-10*).

Jisu Krishti është “Udha, e Vërteta dhe Jeta” (*Joani 14:6*). Ai flet fjalët e Perëndisë. Ai bën punën e Perëndisë. Personi që i bindet Krishtit dhe ndjek udhën e Tij bën çfarë Ai bën, do Perëndinë dhe kryen vullnetin e Tij. Të bësh këtë është esenca e jetës shpirtërore. Jisui erdhi që ne të mund të bëhemi të ngjashëm me Atë

dhe të bëjmë në jetët tona, me anë të hirit të Tij, çfarë Ai Vetë bëri.

Në të vërtetë, në të vërtetë po ju them: kush beson në mua do të bëjë edhe ai veprat që bëj unë; madje do të bëjë edhe më të mëdha se këto, sepse unë po shkoj tek Ati (*Joani 14:12*).



Coming Events

November

- 13: 17th All-American Council, Parma, OH
- 14: Holy Apostle Philip
- 15: Nativity Fast begins
- 16: Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew
- 21: Entrance of the Virgin Mary into the Temple
9:30 a.m. — Divine Liturgy
7:00 p.m. — Thanksgiving Service
- 22: Thanksgiving Day
- 25: Holy Great Martyr Catherine
- 27: 12:00 noon — Senior's Luncheon
7:00 p.m. — Book Club meeting
- 28: 100th Anniversary of Albanian Independence
- 30: Holy Apostle Andrew
7:00 p.m. — Albanian Independence Day celebration

December

- 6: Saint Nicholas
9:30 a.m. — Divine Liturgy
- 13: Saint Herman of Alaska
- 19: Visit of sister from Saint Elizabeth Convent, Minsk, Belarus
- 24: Eve of the Nativity of our Lord
5:00 p.m. — Festal Matins and Carol Sing
- 25: Nativity of our Lord
10:00 a.m. — Divine Liturgy
- 31: New Year's Eve
5:00 p.m. — Vespersal Divine Liturgy

Looking ahead...

- January 6, 2013: Theophany
- February 24: Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee (*no fasting on Wednesday or Friday this week*)
- March 18: Great Lent begins
- March 31: Western Easter
- May 5: Pascha — Orthodox Easter
- June 23: Pentecost



Bible Study

On September 5, the Wednesday-evening **Bible Study Group** resumed its meetings. Instead of meeting on alternate Wednesdays, as they did previously, the group is now meeting every Wednesday.

Before the actual Bible Study, the Akathist Hymn, "**Glory to God for all things**" will be celebrated at 6:30 p.m. in Church. The Bible Study will begin at 7:00 p.m. and last until about 8:30 p.m. The discussions are lively and interesting and are not strictly limited to the Gospel text, but can go wherever the interest of the group directs.

The group is currently reading **The Acts of the Apostles**.

The Bible Study group is open to anyone with an interest in the Bible and the Orthodox Faith.

Please join us!

October 1, 2012



ST. GEORGE CHURCH HEALTH TEAM

Natural Church Development

Look What's New At St. George!

St. George Church has been participating in an exciting process called **Natural Church Development**, led by the *Church Health Team*. The following activities have been organized as a result of the feedback acquired from parishioners who participated in 8 Focus Group Sessions over the past several months. They aim to increase *Fervent Spirituality*, which was identified as the lowest minimum factor out of 8 Quality Characteristics of growing churches in a survey of parishioners. The activities target increased education and connection in an effort to increase spirituality.

- **Monthly "Coffee and Conversations"**—brief information sessions during Coffee Hour on a topic related to our Faith followed by questions. Will take place the last Sunday of each month. 1st session is October 28th and the topic will be "*Spirituality: What is it?*"
- **Reunion/Outreach aimed at Young Adults**—Targeted for November. Our newly created St. George Facebook Page will facilitate connecting with this group. Coordinated by Jessica Chadwick and Danielle Masek.
- **Outreach to Elderly/Shut-ins**—Providing rides to church and bible study—coordinated by Elsie Gartsu. Visitations coordinated by Sharon Buzi and Dolores Nauchy. Please contact these coordinators to offer your services or to request a ride or visit.
- **Bible Study**—Now offered weekly on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. A 6:30 p.m. service is now offered before Bible Study for another opportunity for spiritual participation and reflection. You may attend either or both whenever you can. You do not have to be there every week to attend.
- **Spiritual Book Club**—Coordinated by Karen Masek and Laura Coughlin. 1st meeting will take place November 27th. *Bread & Water, Wine & Oil* by Archimandrite Meletios Webber is the first book choice. Contact Laura or Karen if you are interested. Friends are welcome too! Frequency of meetings will be based upon interest. Book will be available through church.

According to the Natural Church Development Process, how does focusing on our minimum factor help? "The minimum strategy assumes that the growth of a church is blocked by the quality characteristics that are least developed. If a church focuses its energy primarily on these minimum factors, this alone can lead to future growth."

Health Team Members:

George Barmashi
 Greg Buzi
 Laura Chadwick
 Laura Coughlin
 Bill Kovachi
 Bob Lazar
 Charlie Soter

Fervent Spirituality...

"Fervent Spirituality refers to the fervor, the enthusiasm, the zeal, the dedication with which Orthodox Christians commit themselves to Christ."

Orthodox Natural Church Development

The Wonderworker

The Wonderworker
is a quarterly publication of
Saint George Orthodox Church,
Trumbull, Connecticut
a parish of the
Albanian Archdiocese
of the
Orthodox Church in America
Archpriest Dennis R. Rhodes,
Rector
Laura Chadwick
Council President



Saint George Orthodox Church
5490 Main Street
Trumbull, Connecticut 06611-2932
FORWARD AND ADDRESS CORRECTION